

Madison Mennonite Church
Koinonia Worship

OCTOBER 25, 2020

GATHERING

Greet one another and add names to the liturgy of those who would like to lead, read, or facilitate. Each blank can be filled by a different person, and all ages are encouraged to participate in leadership! Help non-readers with their lines. Everyone reads the "Many" parts, unmuted for groups reading virtually. Re-mute afterward.

Call to Worship: Leader _____

Leader: Welcome, friends, to this sacred time of worship.
Though you come with worries about the future,
misgivings about the upcoming election,
and fear for what our nation may become,
know that God remains with us, moving in our midst,
giving us the courage to live faithfully.

Many: Welcome, friends, to worship!

Lighting our Candles: Leader _____

Leader: Each week, we light a candle to symbolize Christ's presence with us and the unity we have with our beloved siblings at Madison Mennonite.

Light candles

Leader: Christ, our light, bless our fellowship with your Spirit's presence. We remember other MMC Koinonia Groups and pray that we are all united in love and peace. Amen.

HEARING the WORD -- Reader 1 _____ ; **Reader 2** _____

Reader 1: A reading from Jeremiah 29:4-7.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Reader 2: Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Optional activity during worship: All ages, but children especially, are invited to consider ways in which people work together, helping each other to be healthy and happy and kind. You may draw or write about this, gather things from their room, build something with Legos, etc. and share during the discussion.

Guiding Reflection (J. Denny Weaver) : **Reader:** _____

"Mennonites and other peace people believe that allegiance to the Reign of God is a higher loyalty than loyalty to the nation, which also claims ultimate loyalty. For this reason, some Mennonites believe

that not voting—that is, not participating in the nation's political process—is the appropriate way to witness to the higher loyalty to the Reign of God.

Along with many progressive-oriented peace people, I also profess allegiance to the Reign of God, but I think voting is appropriate, even necessary. In the life of Jesus, as we read about it in the New Testament, the Reign of God is made visible on earth. As followers of Jesus, who attempt to live within his life, our lives also testify to the Reign of God. While our actions can never bring the Reign of God to fruition in its fullness, we can nonetheless take actions that point things in the direction of the Reign of God. It is certainly logical to think that one candidate more than the other will pursue policies that point in the direction of the justice of the Reign of God. Voting is then one more way that we can attempt to move things in a just direction. And currently, with issues of racial justice, health care, and economic disparity so prominent, voting is more important than ever.

If the candidate we voted for loses, then we continue to work for racial justice, health care for all, and economic fairness. But since human activity will not bring in the Reign of God in its fullness, even if our candidate wins we will also continue with our advocacy.

For me, this theological analysis provides comfort, particularly when the political situation seems out of control. Even as we continue to do work for justice that witnesses to the Reign of God, the fact that we have a higher loyalty than the national ideology gives us an identity that is not fundamentally dependent on what happens in the political arena.”

Questions for Group Reflection: Facilitator _____

(The facilitator reads the questions aloud and invites response. At 25 minutes into your gathering, or when conversation has dwindled, the facilitator closes the time with prayer, below.)

1. How do Anabaptist principles inform your political loyalties and values? Have other communities also shaped your politics?
2. What does it mean to you to “seek the welfare of the city” in our 21st-century communities?
3. How can we more effectively demonstrate Christian love across political and social divides?
4. What is one thing you would do to help people if you were President? Why?

At the closing of this time of sharing, pray together:

Facilitator: Loving Spirit, we give you thanks for your neverending faithfulness. We pray for wisdom to choose faithfully, for courage to speak faithfully, and for love to live faithfully, not only during this contentious time, but every day we walk with you. Amen.

RESPONDING in PRAYER and FELLOWSHIP

Sharing Joys and Concerns: Leader _____

The Leader invites each person (children included!) to share any joys or concerns they bring to the group. Remind your group that if anyone does not wish to share, they may simply say “pass.” After all, including the Leader, have been invited to share, and if no one has something to add after a first round, join in a spirit of prayer (below).



Level 1B adaptation: *If the group is 15 people or larger, invite people to type their name in the chat if they would like to share, as we do on All-Church Sundays. Call on people in that order. If the group is smaller than 15 people, follow the instructions above.*

Praying Together

Leader: Holy God, we offer these prayers to you this day, trusting in your faithfulness.
We pray for health - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual - for ourselves and our loved ones. *(a moment for silent prayer)*
We pray for justice and compassion in our community, our nation, and our world.
(a moment for silent prayer)
Loving God,
Many: hear our prayers. Amen.

Sharing the Peace of Christ: **Leader** _____

One: We go knowing that nothing, not fear of the future, not corrupt politicians, not unjust policies, can separate us from the love of God. May the certainty of God's love surround you.
Many: And may it surround you as well.

Continued Fellowship (as time allows)

Invite children to share anything they've created or worked on during this worship time.

Koinonia Worship 10.25 curated by Adult CE Committee and Todd Shenk.

Sources used:

Bible readings from the NRSV.
Reflection by J. Denny Weaver

Announcements:

*If you plan to attend the All Saints/Souls Day service on Saturday, and wish to share a photograph or a recording of a hymn, please forward these to Madi Vander Hill by Thursday, Oct. 29

This Week's Calendar:

Wed Oct 28 - Youth CE 7 pm
Community Care Call 8:15 pm
Thu Oct 29 - Core CLC 6:30 pm
Sat Oct 31 - All Saints'/Souls' Service 5 pm
Sun Nov 1 - All-Church Adult CE 4pm,
Worship 5pm, and Fellowship Time

For links to these virtual gatherings, please see the weekly e-calendar. To add an event, please email Erica Boehr.



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